

THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS



No. 188.—Vol. VII.]

FOR THE WEEK ENDING SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6, 1845.

[SIXPENCE.]

NATIONAL DEFENCE.

WHATEVER may be the prospects of war, certain it is that no nation appears, at present, to have a perfect confidence in the continuation of peace. The uneasiness of feeling may be traced more in the acts of their Governments than their declarations. Suspicion of one's neighbours is always an unpleasant frame of mind to exhibit, and, as long as may be, is generally concealed. But the close observer can mark the preparations for the worst. The outward demeanour is that of courtesy—for there is a reluctance to give offence; but there is a slight degree of watchfulness too marked to co-exist with entire confidence. The eye of the Ruler, like that of *Othello*, after the hints of *Iago*, is worn "nor jealous, nor secure," and directed with a sharpness of observation which, a little increased, degenerates into mistrust.

Happy would it be for the world, had the time arrived in which it is foretold that "nation shall not rise up against nation; neither shall there be war any more." But that era has not yet come; we may not hope, even, that it is near; and as every generation must adapt itself to the present condition of things—utterly unable to anticipate the future—those who would fain have "peace in their time," are compelled to be prepared for an alternative they abhor, and provide the means of resisting that aggression which some, we know, are able to commit, and which others, there is reason to fear, are only too eager to begin. A peaceable disposition is no security against insult or oppression, while some nations are possessed by the ruffian spirit that recognises no limits to their will to do wrong, save the ability of others to check it by the strong hand. The civilisation of a state gives the weak of body a protection against the strongest, who might, otherwise, rob and maltreat his fellow with impunity; but the world has never been equally civilised everywhere, nor at the same time.

Some nation has always been pre-eminent, and aroused envy of her greatness, and as the extreme of civilisation is not favourable to the rougher and more martial virtues, the country that most requires attention to its means of defence, has often been found most deficient in them. The Romans, who conquered the world, degenerated at last into a worthless race, who sought safety from the purchased valour of mercenaries, and their empire fell beneath the irruption of barbarians. Strength to resist attack is one of the conditions of national existence, and will remain so as long as war must be regarded, however reluctantly, as possible.

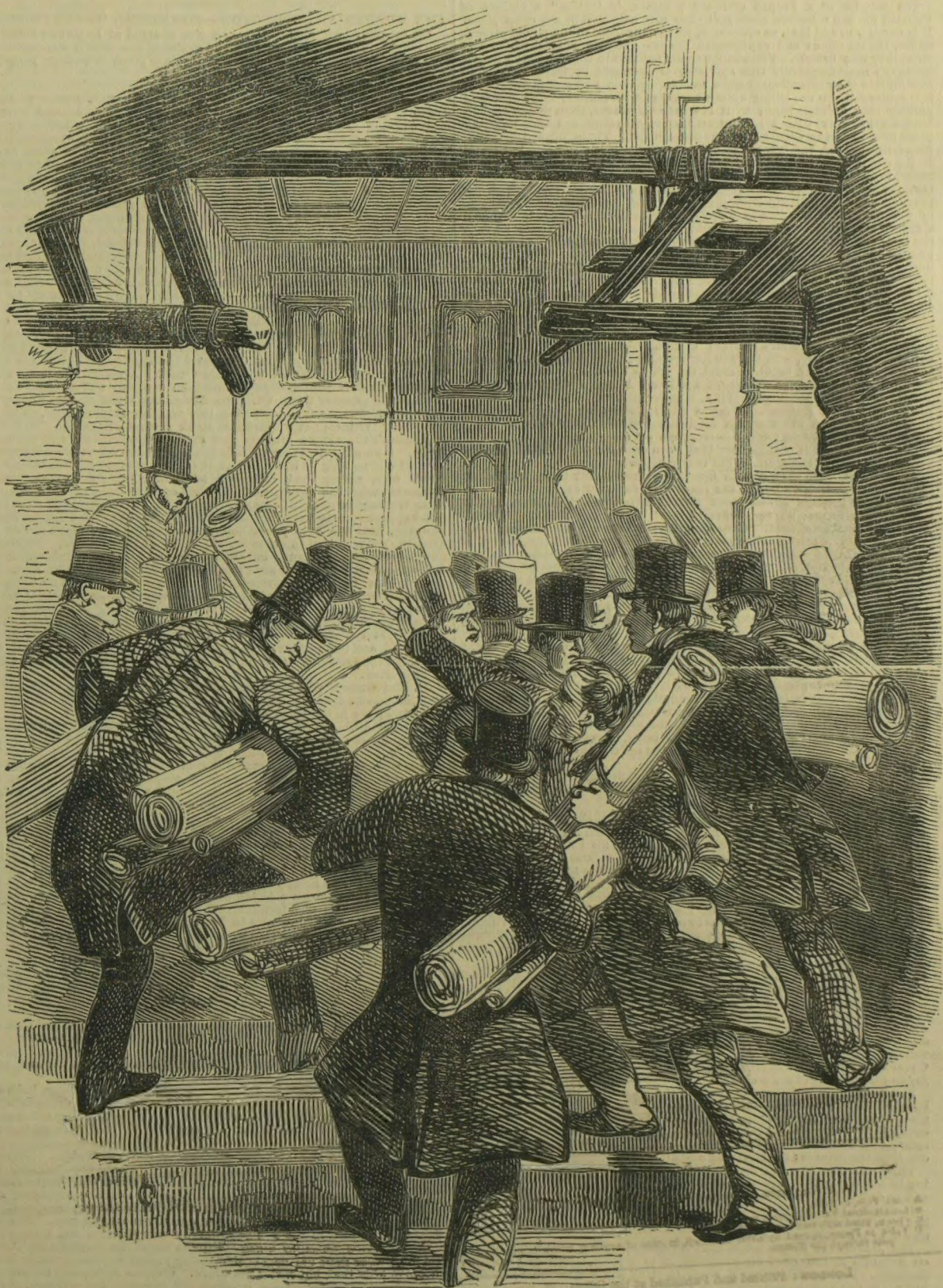
And most reluctantly we are compelled to regard it as possible at the present time. It is not probable, perhaps; for as yet the rulers of the most influential nations are fully aware of the consequence of hostilities. But in France the popular mind is constrained to be peaceful against its natural tendency, rather than kept so it from a conviction of its wisdom, its morality, and its advantages. There the idea of national greatness is linked with a career of European conquest, like that it once pursued under Louis the Fourteenth, and again, and more fatally effective as an example, under Napoleon. Nothing could persuade the bulk of the French nation that such an increase of territory and expansion of power is not real prosperity, nor even remotely allied to it. They are ready to plunge into a war to-morrow with any people of Europe; and a war with England in particular would, we fear, be a popular measure in any ruler who should see in it a means of rising to power. Her immense military force, the greater portion of it always concentrated on her own territory, added to the aggressive disposition of her people, must always keep her nearest neighbours in a state of vigilance if not anxiety, especially when affairs look threatening from other quarters. If America should make an appeal to arms to decide the right to a large but barren territory, which neither party has as yet thought worth possessing, it will be less from any hope of contending with us successfully than with the probability of offering France an opportunity too tempting to be resisted of attacking her European rival; and that the opportunity would be readily seized we have little doubt.

It is the impression that while such feelings exist abroad, we cannot be perfectly quiescent, and at the same time secure, at home, which has produced the recent activity in preparations for defence. It appears that a portion of the militia is to be called out; the merchant steamers of the different private companies have been surveyed, to ascertain what is their capability of bearing an armament. The fortifications of our ports and arsenals have been inspected, old batteries are being repaired, new ones constructed, and improvements to be applied to them are now employing hundreds of men in our Dockyards; armed hulks are, it seems, to be moored off different points, to serve as floating batteries, and increase the strength of the coast against attack. All this implies that a terrible possibility has been at least contemplated.

[COUNTRY EDITION.]

We wish we could persuade ourselves that such measures of precaution were unnecessary. But there is no instance in past history of any nation who neglected the means of defence, or suffered them to fall into decay, either by wasting the public revenue, or forcing the people by oppressive government into weakness and degeneracy, that did not at last fall prostrate before the first invader. This may reconcile us to the necessity of measures which, to many abstract reasoners, may appear irrational. Arts, sciences, commerce, public liberties, social prosperity, all perish among an invaded people; and the more flourishing is the state of a nation, the more should it feel a readiness to defend the blessings it enjoys. But the will to do so is not enough; war—the scientific application of force—is not learned, and cannot be practised by intuition. The people of this country know not, except from tradition, what war is; the whole surface of Europe

has been trodden down by hostile armies, while we only heard from a distance the fall of cities and the shock of hosts. Our insular position, and supremacy on the seas, preserved us from the actual presence of the destroying power, which was, and is, more felt in the pressure of taxation than in any other shape. Nothing more sad than human tears has bedewed our soil for centuries; of those we have had our portion; but the bloodshed and the havoc of war in our own borders have happily been spared us. But it would be imprudent to take it for granted, that what has not happened in such a lapse of time can never happen at all. The very facilities of intercourse that peace creates, are, like all human things, capable of being abused, and perverted to destructive purposes. Steam has reduced our strongest outwork, the Channel, to as little importance as a river was thirty years ago; and the new state of physical agents



DEPOSITS OF RAILWAY PLANS WITH THE BOARD OF TRADE—THE RUSH AT THE DOOR.—(SEE PAGE 370.)



ALGERIA.—PASSAGE OF THE IRON GATES.

VISIT OF THE RAJAH OF TRAVANCORE TO QUILON, MADRAS.

(From a Correspondent.)

The accompanying sketch represents the arrival of his Highness the Rajah of Travancore at the cantonment of Quilon, Madras, on the 10th of September last. It had been predicted by the Brahmins attached to his Court that a famine would prevail this year in his dominions, unless he would visit Quilon and go through certain ceremonials there for the prevention of such a calamity. Accordingly, notice was received by the officer commanding Quilon, from General Cullen, the British Resident at his court, to receive the Rajah with all honour on his arrival. His Highness's residence is at Trivandrum, the capital of his dominions, and about forty miles from Quilon; a rapid communication between which places is by a backwater, running along the coast, which has been enlarged and extended by canals, &c., executed by his Highness during the last few years. The sketch represents his Highness's arrival at the cantonment bridge, at Quilon, by boat; to the landing-place of which a spacious pandal, or covered way, was erected from the road, and decorated with garlands of flowers. Here his Highness mounted his state elephant, superbly caparisoned with jewels and beautiful velvets, and attended by two of his peons, with choudries, or fly-brushes, with elegant gold handles, to brush away any insect or dust approaching the Royal person. His Highness was attended by his Highness the Elliah Rajah, his brother, and, also, by the second Prince, his nephew, who rode immediately behind him on horses, superbly

housed and decorated. Immediately preceding him were his state palanquin, composed entirely of silver, and fitted up with dark green velvet. His wardrobe was carried by attendants, in boxes covered with tiger skins, and massively bound with silver. At the head of the procession are his Highness's cavalry and infantry brigade, followed by the state carriage. Immediately after his Highness the Elliah Rajah followed the stud, elephants, English carriages, colour-bearers, ladies of the family, and handsome palanquins, &c. His Highness was received by the 12th Regiment Madras Native Infantry in review order, and by the principal civil and military officers of the station. Many ladies were present, and the whole cortege presented a superb and beautiful spectacle, such as is seldom seen, now-a-days, amongst our eastern Princes.

IRENA MACRINA MIECZYSLASKA, SUPERIOR OF THE BASILIAN CONVENT OF MINSK.

In former numbers of our Journal, we gave some of the details of the persecution carried on by the Russian Government against all those forms of religious belief that differ from the Greek Church, and against the Roman Catholic faith in particular. The policy of discouraging all religions, save that of the State, was commenced by the Empress Catherine; but the severities practised under the orders of the present Emperor, exceed anything witnessed in modern times, and rival the cruelties inflicted on the early Christians by the worst of the Pagan Emperors of Rome.

We need not again enter into these details, which will be found in No. 186. But as the subject has excited great interest, in consequence of the Emperor, having shown himself ready to allow his daughter to embrace the very religion he so ruthlessly oppresses, we give a sketch of the Superior of the Convent which was broken up and destroyed by his orders, after having survived the storms of the wars and revolutions for two hundred and twenty years, the inmates being murdered, mutilated, exposed to death by starvation, and the accidents of rude employment, and to insults and outrages of all descriptions.

Fourteen out of thirty-four survived their atrocious treatment, though in a dreadful state of weakness and mutilation. They were ordered into exile in Siberia; but, before the convoy could set out, the Superior and three of the sisters effected their escape, of which the author of "Revelations of Russia," in a new work, entitled "Eastern Europe and the Emperor Nicholas," gives the following account:—

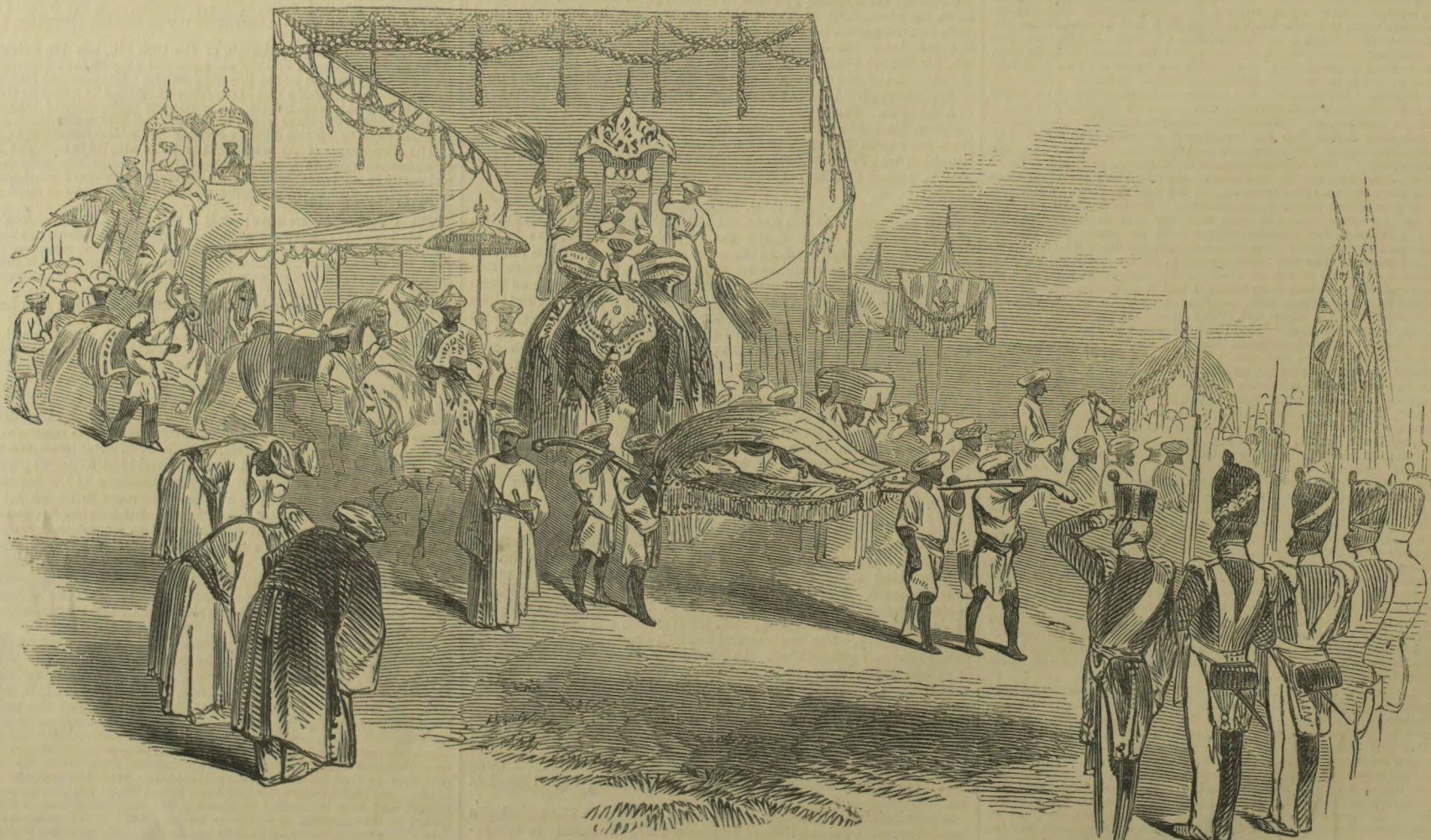
"At the commencement of the present year, profiting by the scene of riot and drunkenness, to which the saint's-day of the *protopope* of the convent had given occasion, they effected their escape. Leaping down a high wall into the snow they alighted in safety, and immediately fell on their knees in thanksgiving. They then separated, to facilitate their flight. The Superior, in the midst of all the severity of the season, was driven to hide for days together in the woods, without other food than berries, or anything to quench her thirst but the snow. Once, driven to extremity, she knocked at the door of a wealthy-looking house, and being received with veneration by its owner, was provided with money, provisions, and a correct map of her route. She crossed the frontier disguised as a shepherd; but even then was not in security, as the cowardly Government of Prussia gives up even its own subjects to the Czar. It was not until she had reached Posen, in the midst of a Polish population, that she felt in security."

The three others also effected their escape in safety; the Superior, after residing a short time at Paris, proceeded to Rome; her statement of the sufferings of herself and co-religionists, made on oath, before the Archbishop of Posen, and attested by the seal of the diocese, had been previously forwarded to the Vatican. It will hardly tend to procure for the Emperor of Russia a very cordial reception on his arrival at Rome, which is at present expected. From the work above quoted we also subjoin the following personal description:—



IRENA MACRINA MIECZYSLASKA, SUPERIOR OF THE CONVENT OF ST. BASIL.

"Irena Mieczyslaska had been thirty years renowned for her charity and benevolence throughout the Government of Minsk, as head of the 'Basilian Convent,' consisting of thirty-four nuns, in the city of that name. It will be hence at once perceived that she is advancing into the vale of years. The aspect of her countenance is at once noble and indicative of determination. It derives the first expression from the position of the eyes, which is such as we rarely meet with out of the Scandinavian or Anglo-Norman race, viz., obliquely upwards from the outward corners, that is to say, in a direction precisely contrary to the eyes of the feline species, of all Mongolian races, and many inhabitants of the southern countries. The finely-chiselled corners of her mouth seem to mark a decision of temper, of which she has given the most heroic proofs in her conduct."



VISIT OF THE RAJAH OF TRAVANCORE TO MADRAS.



RANGOON, THE PRINCIPAL PORT OF THE BIRMAN EMPIRE.

RANGOON.

By the last received Indian Mail, accounts from Amerapoora describe affairs at the Burmese capital to be in a most agitated state. "Tharawaddie, the King, having thought proper to appoint and install an 'heir apparent,' selected a son of legitimate birth and claims for that purpose, which gave offence to the Prince, who has been playing rather a conspicuous part since his father assumed royalty, and, as the heir apparent is little better than an idiot,—something like disaffection began to be manifested. Tharawaddie, therefore, summoned his son, the Prince of Prome, to the presence; but the summons was evaded. He then commanded his chief, Woongee Moun-gau-gher, to appear before him, and, having been informed that he had been to the house of the Prince of Prome, the savage monarch set upon him as soon as he came, and put him to death with his own hand, by spearing him through the body. Others of the principal Woongees were speedily despatched by the hands of executioners, and murder became the order of the day. The Prince of Prome, on hearing of these outrageous proceedings of Tharawaddie, collected a body of troops on whom he could depend, and, crossing the river Tsagaing, was preparing to meet the coming storm. He is represented as an enterprising man, fit to cope with the present state of affairs; and it is prognosticated that he will succeed in dethroning the King, and placing himself on the throne—a change which will be hailed with joy by the people, who regard Tharawaddie as the greatest tyrant and monster of cruelty that ever filled the Burmese Throne."

This intelligence will, in all probability, have the effect of drawing attention to Rangoon, which is the most commercial port of the Birman Empire; where the imports of British manufactures are very considerable; including piece-goods, woollens, glass-ware, &c.

Rangoon is built on the most eastern branch of the river Irawadi, about twenty-six miles from the sea; and, though the navigation is somewhat intricate, the difficulties are easily overcome by good pilots; so that vessels of 1200 tons have proceeded to the port.

The town lies on the left bank of the river, from the banks of which the ground rises gradually for more than two miles to the foot of the hill on which the grand Dagong Pagoda is built, the base of which appears to be 70 or 80 feet above the level of the Irawadi. The town and suburbs extend about a mile along the bank of the river: the streets are narrow; the houses are raised on bamboos, or strong timbers. The few brick-built houses belong chiefly to Europeans, who pay a heavy tax for this privilege: no subject of the Birman Empire is permitted to erect a brick building. These brick houses are built within the myo, or city, which is an irregular quadrangle, surrounded by a stockade, composed of heavy beams of teak timber. On the south side of this stockade, towards the river, is a ditch, over which there is a causeway. From this face of the stockade, two brick-paved roads lead to the great pagoda, Shewi Dagong, and along the sides are built a number of *sedis*, or monuments, in honour of Buddha. In form, they resemble a speaking-trumpet standing on its base: the tower part is generally a polygon, and the shaft, or upper part, is round, the apex being ornamented with an iron net in the form of an umbrella, called a *ti*. The Shewi Dagong is in the same style as the rest, but richly gilt all over: it is said to be about 278 feet high, and is surrounded by an inclosure, in which is an immense bell, of very rude fabric. This pagoda is a place of pilgrimage, frequented by many strangers.

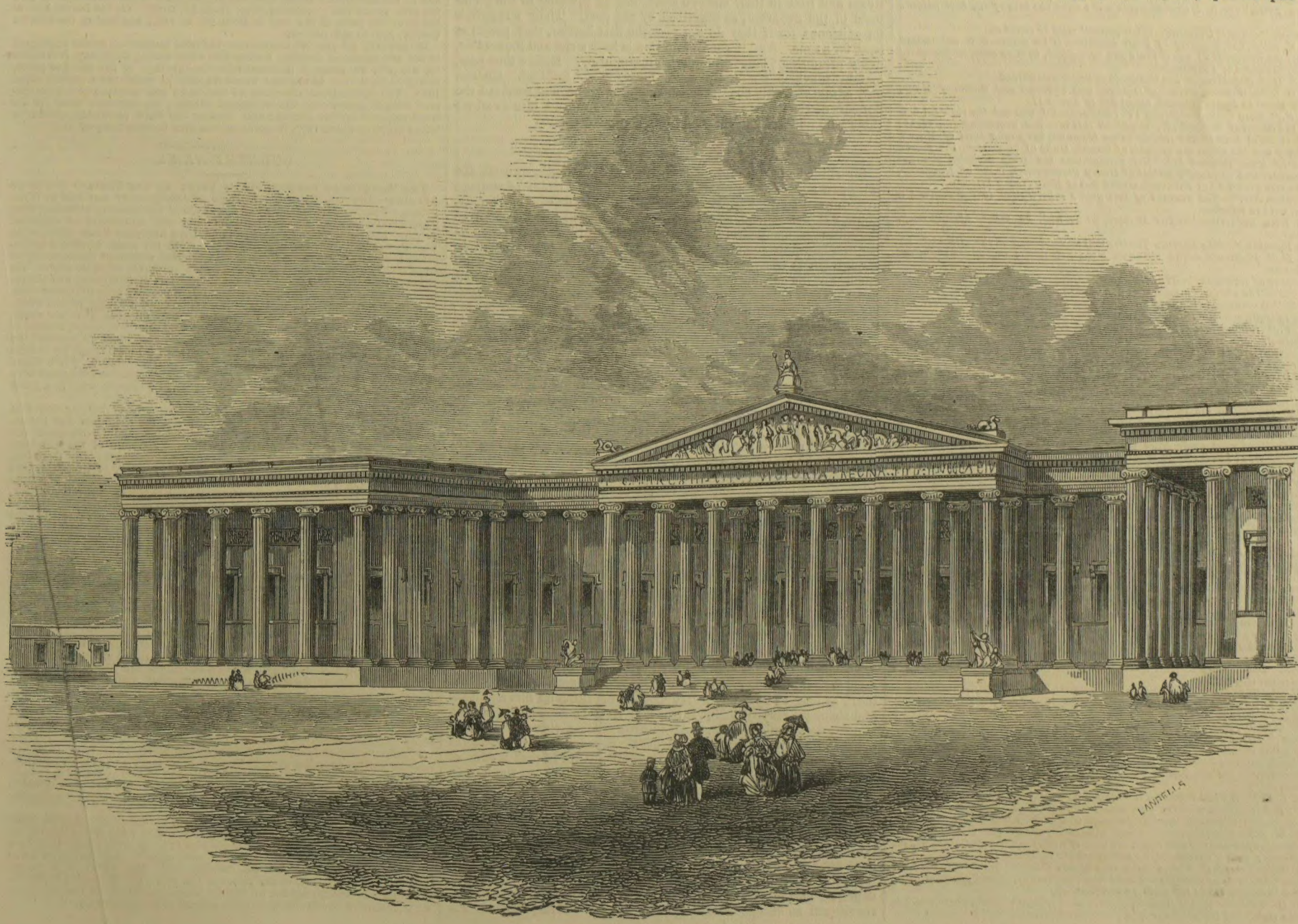
Rangoon is very convenient for ship-building, as the tide rises from 18 to 24 feet, and the great teak forests are near it; whence the timber may be floated down the whole way.

Rangoon has been built about a century. The climate is temperate, agreeable, and salubrious. The place, at first, rose slowly: even at the beginning of the present century, the number of vessels that cleared out was only from 18 to 25 annually: in twenty years, they were doubled. Since the time of its occupation by the British (from 1824 to 1826), its commerce with Calcutta, and other British possessions in India, has been continually increasing. The most active commerce is carried on with Chittagong, Dacca, Calcutta, Madras, Masulipatam, the Nicobar Islands, and Pulo Penang; there is also some trade with Bombay and the Persian and Arabian gulfs. The exports are teak-wood, catechu, stick lac, bees' wax, elephants' teeth, raw cotton, opiment, gold, silver, rubies, and horses. Raw cotton, of superior quality, is sent to Dacca for the fabrication of the finest muslins. The principal foreign vessels which visit the harbour, are British, American, and Chinese.

THE NEW BRITISH MUSEUM.

Although two years more may elapse before the whole *façade* of the New British Museum is completed, we have availed ourselves of an opportunity of thus anticipatorily presenting to our readers the design, as amended by the Architect, and enriched with sculptural decoration.

Nearly two years since, we engraved Sir Robert Smirke's amended design (see No. 89, page 28, of our Journal). By comparison of this Illustration with the above (obtained by the same authentic means) the reader will, at once, perceive the extent and character of the additions. Thus, the frieze will bear an inscription; the tympanum of the pediment will be filled with appropriate sculpture; upon its apex will



FACADE OF THE NEW BRITISH MUSEUM.

DEPOSITS OF RAILWAY PLANS AT THE BOARD OF TRADE.



OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF TRADE.—SCENE ON SUNDAY NIGHT.

A strange spectacle was witnessed in the metropolis on Sunday last. The Legislature having, probably from an oversight, fixed the 30th of November as the last day for the reception of Railway plans, sections, &c., at the Board of Trade, many parties, pressed for time, left the completion of their work to the latest possible period, and, consequently, the vicinity of the office of the Board of Trade, on Sunday afternoon, presented a scene of excitement and bustle happily very unusual on the Sabbath.

At one o'clock the offices were opened, and, during the afternoon, cabs and carriages of all descriptions came down, but not in very rapid succession; and the plans were delivered without much trouble to those who had charge of them, or inconvenience to the Government officials.

As the evening advanced, the arrivals became more frequent, and at nine

o'clock they poured down Whitehall most plentifully, and in the most deplorable disorder.

Having disgorged their freights of parchment and paper, the cabs drew off, and the depositors exhibited unequivocal signs of joy at the triumphs they had secured.

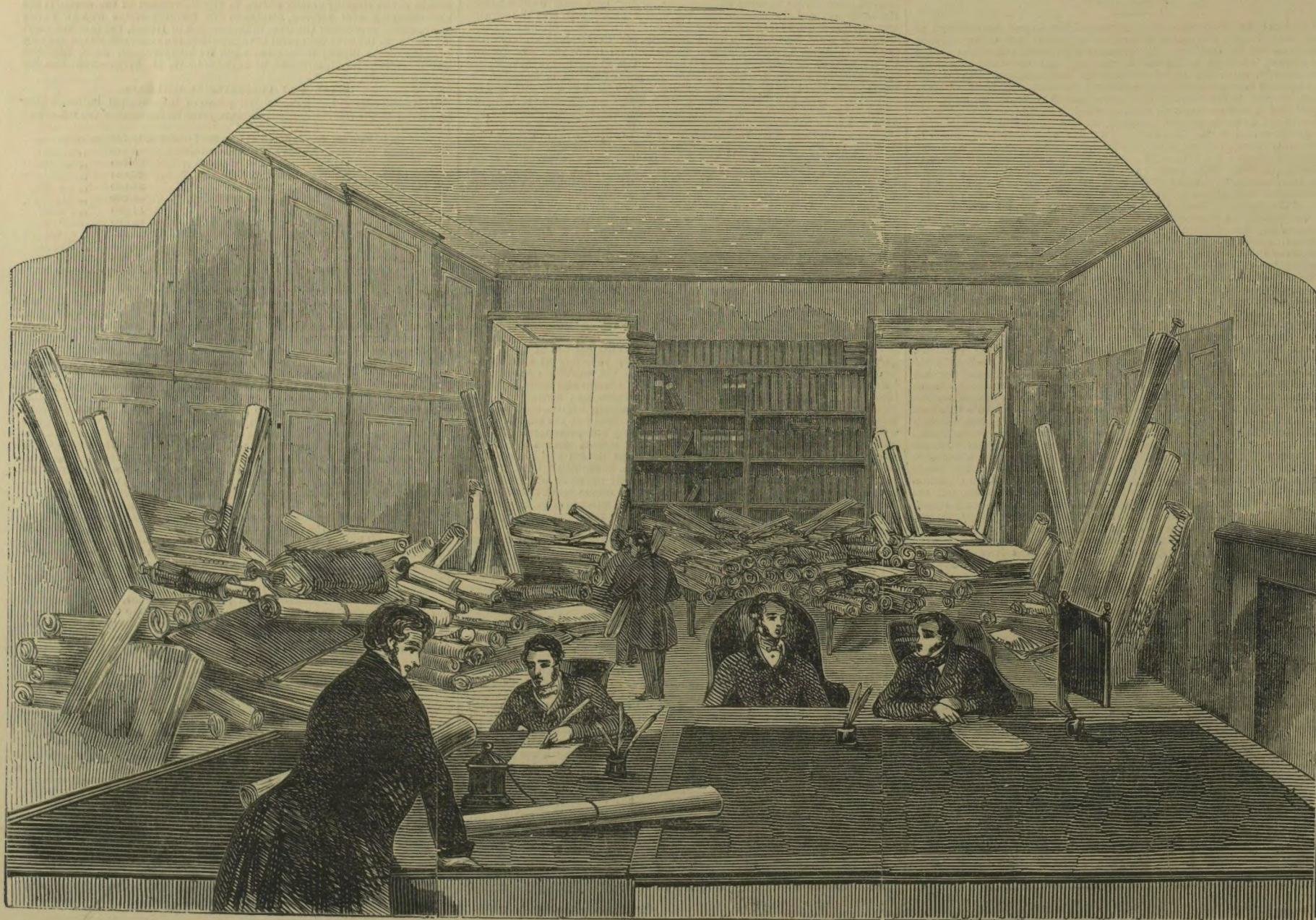
The method adopted for the reception of the documents was as follows:—The parties charged with their delivery were admitted to the lobby of the office of the Board of Trade, where they entered the name of the agents for whom they were concerned, in a book provided for that purpose. The name was then passed to an official, who conveyed the same to the inner office, where it was entered by the clerks.

The several parties were then successively called in, to describe the names and titles of their respective plans.

A good deal of amusement was caused by the similarity of names amongst the agents, particularly when any gentleman of the name of *Smith* was wanted. At every such call, there were at least half-a-dozen respondents, and it very seldom happened that the right agent was pitched upon by the subordinates below, who, being ignorant of the projects with which the agents were connected, always ushered up the Mr. Smith who happened to be most clamorous.

From an early period of the evening a large concourse of persons had assembled, and displayed the utmost freedom in their remarks upon the huge piles of paper which were to be consigned to their resting place. The bearers were also, in several instances, made the objects of some bitter jests; but their attention was too much occupied by the matter they had in hand to heed them.

The scene was an animated one in the waiting-room of the Board of Trade, about eleven o'clock on Sunday night. But an hour remained, and yet some



RAILWAY BOOM, OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF TRADE.

thirty individuals were in waiting with huge piles of parchment and the various necessary documents. Anxiety was depicted on every countenance—some fearing that, after all the labour and excitement they had undergone, they would not be able to complete the requisite formalities within the very limited time that remained. Eager inquiries were made from one to the other as to the opinion whether those who had actually arrived with their plans would be allowed to remain and complete the business after the hour of twelve had arrived, and various and amusing were the mutual recitals made of the "hairbreadth" escapes and daring doings of those entrusted with the task of lodging the respective plans. Six express trains had been ordered on one line (the Great Western) very nearly at the same hour, for each of which it was said about £80 were paid; and there was no lack of reports of casualties and *contretemps* caused by this unusual pressure upon the line. Indeed, it was known that one train had actually run into another; and this fact formed the basis of some harrowing reports of the loss of life and mischief that had occurred.

Besides all this dashing and whirling upon the line with the trains, it is said the electrical telegraph was set at work very ingeniously and usefully. For instance, in cases where something had been forgotten, a message was sent to request that such a plan or section should be sent up, and straightway the omission was repaired. Where the business was happily completed, the electric telegraph conveyed to the anxious projectors the simple but emphatic and consoling intimation of "All right." This notice could in some instances have been reversed with entire truth, for it appears that in the hurry the valuable documents had been forgotten, so that "all left" behind would have been a very accurate intimation.

The *Chronicle* alludes to instances of sharp practice resorted to by Railway Companies to defeat competitors. Our contemporary says:—

"The majority of plans from the provinces have been sent up by express trains, and it is whispered that in this respect those companies with the locomotives at their command, and to whom the lines belonged, availed themselves of this advantage to such an extent for the exclusive transmission of their own plans and sections, as actually to refuse special trains to their competitors. In one instance, however, they were most adroitly out-generalled, and a *ruse* was resorted to that for its originality and rarity lays claim to no little admiration. One of the established companies, with express powers at their command, peremptorily refused to the promoters of a competing line an express train for their deposits to town. Not to be outwitted, they hired an undertaker's hearse, placed plans, sections, and clerk inside, and despatched it by special train to town."

As the fatal hour of twelve approached, the anxiety of those in attendance increased to a fearful point. The fate of empires seemed as nothing to the all-important question whether the Directors of the Round-the-Corner Direct and Smash and Squeak Extension should, or should not, be in a position to ask the Parliament to agree to their bill. Happily, however, the fears and forebodings of the modest representatives of the numerous firms of John Roes and Richard Does, then and there present, were destined to terminate in the accomplishment of their wishes. They were all enabled to deposit their valuable commodities with the Board of Trade, and we wish that department joy of them. This last act of deposition was easy of accomplishment. The name of the Railway was given in at the same time with the plans, and formal notice being taken of the fact, the business was completed.

Thus far, those who had obtained access to the building before twelve fulfilled their mission. A different fate, however, awaited three gentlemen (rolled into one post-chaise), who were a little too late, and of whose misfortune the *Post* thus relates the sad incidents:—

"As the clock struck twelve, the doors of the office were about being closed, when a gentleman, charged with the delivery of the plans of one of the Surrey Railways, arrived, and with the greatest difficulty succeeded in obtaining admission. These were the last notices deposited. A lull of a few minutes here occurred; but just before the expiration of the first quarter of an hour a post-chaise, with reeking horses, drove up in hot haste to the entrance. In a moment its occupants (three gentlemen) alighted and rushed down the passage towards the office-door, each bearing a plan of Brobdingnagian dimensions. On reaching the door, and finding it closed, the countenance of each drooped; but one of them, more valorous than the rest, and prompted by the bystanders, gave a loud pull at the bell, which was answered by Inspector Otway, who informed him that it was now too late, and that his plans could not be received. The agents did not wait for the conclusion of the unpleasant communication, but took advantage of the door being opened, and threw in their tremendous papers, which fell upon and broke the passage lamp. They were thrown back into the street with as little delicacy as they were pitched into the hall. When the door was again opened, again went in the plans, only to meet a similar fate from the officers. The three agents were now maddened to desperation, and the principal amongst them commenced to tell his tale of woe to the bystanders, from which it appeared that they had that morning left Harwich, charged with the deposition of the plans of a certain Railway proposed to benefit that district; that they had arrived in London as early as half-past ten, but, through the ignorance of the post-boy, had been driving about Finsbury and its neighbourhood, in search of the office of the Board of Trade, for more than an hour and a half previous to their fruitless arrival thereat. The crowd, who had patiently listened to the recital of the unhappy individual, greeted his conclusion with a burst of laughter, which seemed to pierce his already broken heart. At two o'clock—the time at which our informant left—the three luckless agents of the Harwich Railway were still standing at the door, vainly endeavouring to move the sympathies of the obdurate officials."

Thus ended one act of the Railway drama, or tragedy, as it may be, which would have been memorable for the incidents already connected with it, but which

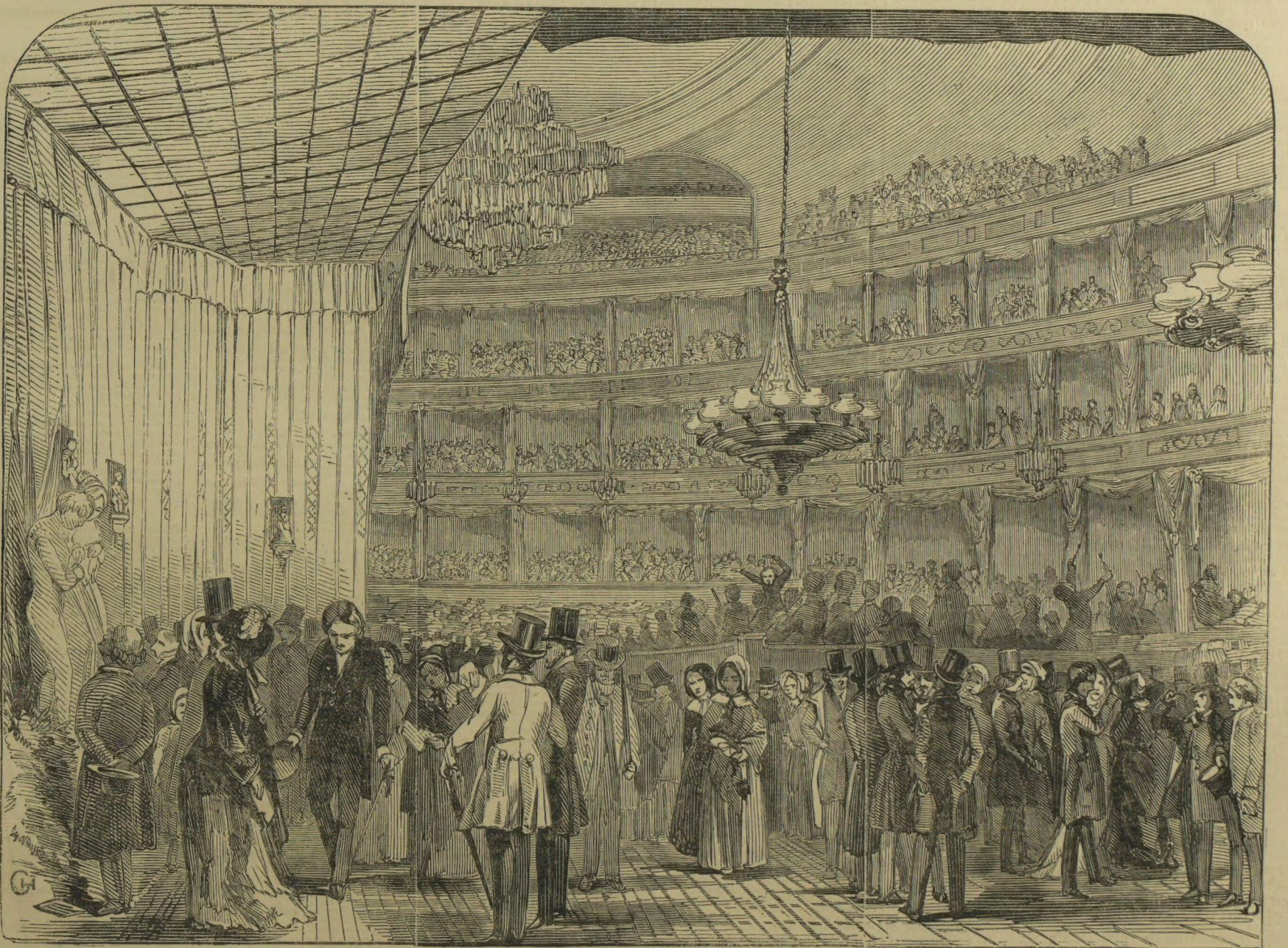


EVE OF THE 30TH.—CORRECTING PLANS AT A TAVERN.

cannot fail to be marked as an era in our history, from the circumstance of its having been performed on a *Sunday*. Opinions about the cause of this deposition of the plans on such a day are divided. Some assert that it was an accident, whilst others contend that it was "a planned thing."

It is almost impossible to conceive the amount of business connected with Railway Illustration that has been carried on, particularly in London, within the

last fortnight. In every department of the work it seems as if it were driven off to the last moment. The consequence has been, that everything has risen to a great premium. Surveyors and levellers have made quite a harvest of it, many of them getting from six to fifteen guineas per day. So great has been the demand, that many unqualified parties came into it, and undertook work to which they were perfectly incompetent, which has been the cause of putting the



JULIEN'S PROMENADE CONCERT, AT COVENT GARDEN THEATRE.—(SEE PAGE 366.)

